

THE ABOLITIONIST

A Publication of the Radical Libertarian Alliance

Has not the experience of centuries shown that gradualism in theory is perpetuity in practice?

—William Lloyd Garrison

VOLUME II Number 3

JUNE 1971

35 cents

Running with MAYDAY

by Bill Baumgarth

Since our RLA presence had been so effective on April 24th in D.C. (The Harvard INDEPENDENT noticed only us and SDS) comrades Geoff Hall and I decided to add a little anarchist elan to the events marking May Day in Washington. Our mission: to close down the heart of Leviathan. Our tactics: non-violent resistance, more specifically, blocking off government workers' access to D.C. by moving our bodies on to the streets and byways.

We arrived in D.C. late Friday night, and headed into West Potomac Park Saturday afternoon, joyfully raising high the heroic black banner of libertarian struggle. Jim Bennet, from the Ann Arbor Anarchists, met us at the park and we spent most of the day hunting down black banners and distributing *The Match!*. It is clear at this point that two separate groups are gathered at the Park. The one, a younger youth-culture group is here to attend the rock concert. The other segment of May Day gatherers are a different breed. They are here to plan the strategy of disruption for Monday and Tuesday. Most of Saturday is spent at political and tactical meetings. Geoff and I manage to stay through most of our region's (Boston) strategic sessions.

The tactics are highly anarchic: the major regions pick representatives who choose the targets that the regions will disrupt. Boston gets the area of access to the Arlington Bridge, near the Lincoln Memorial. Since there are at least three streets leading to this bridge, the Boston group subdivides for further tactical considerations. The implementation and final format for tactics, however, rests upon the affinity groups, consisting of about four to five persons. Boston sets only the parameter of the action: no trashing, no assault on property. Group discipline on these points was extremely effective Monday morning.

Saturday night Jim, Geoff and I go off to Karl Hess' house to prepare a leaflet on anarchism to be distributed Sunday. Unfortunately, The Man closes down Potomac Park Sunday morning, making it impossible for us to meet with Jim. The closing was supposed to disperse May Day, but the Man did not reckon upon the degree of decentralization. May Day is mobile, is on the streets, is converging upon meeting points: George Washington University, American University, various churches. Passing cars, full of comrades, give us the clenched fist and instructions for rendezvous. Sunday morning we spend in the company of an affinity group from Boston, which included an ex-Weatherman who provided us with useful information on street survival. The rest of the day we spend in political discussion and in preparing our medical kits. Sunday night we form our affinity groups in Georgetown, discussing minutiae regarding tactics. Go to bed at 3:00.

At 5:30 Monday, May 3rd, we move into the streets to face



the State. The women in our group have taken our car and plan to use it to block traffic. Cops on every corner, copters circling above—and I'm scared. But somehow we manage to stay in the streets for a good two hours, holding hands in a line to block cars, moving when the pig comes into sight, using masks to ward off the inevitable gas (which, by the way, was used even in the midst of ordinary, law-abiding folk). We rap with the cops for a while but to no avail. Contradictions abound: their class origins turn them off to middle class rebel kids, but their official role in society makes them objectively an enemy of the oppressed classes. My hatred for the police had in the past been only abstract. Now it concretized as I watched the clubbing of non-resisting brothers and sisters, the macing of sitters-in, and my friend Geoff being pursued into a hedge by a motor cycle cop.

Carelessly Geoff and I allowed the police to get behind us on the sidewalk where we had, by this time, taken refuge. We, and several thousand others, were herded into buses, hand-cuffed and gassed. But not officially arrested. When we asked what the charge was, the police captain replied: "Because you're here, Commie bastards."

We arrive at the Concentration Camp near Kennedy stadium (the connection need not be coincidental). As we get off the busses, the earlier arrivals line up to cheer us. No heat, no shelter, no sanitary facilities. No food for six hours (until ham sandwiches arrive). We are gassed inside the camp. The atmosphere of the

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camp however, is one of purpose. We build tents, construct sanitary areas, have rallies, are visited by Congressmen and women. We form a giant peace sign on the ground. The black community outside the camp throw food in to us. But from 9:00 in the morning, till 10:00 at night, when we march out to our buses under search lights reminiscent of Hogan's Heroes, our greatest need is warmth. The Man brings us to an indoor ice rink, where we try to sleep on the concrete floor. The police have opened all doors and windows to cool us down. There is still no legal aid, no formal charges. The National Guard is somewhat friendly to us: giving us oranges, cocoa and even, at 3:00 AM, blankets. We reciprocate by demanding successfully, that the Guard be permitted to sit, rather than stand at attention.

At 8:00 AM Tuesday morning, just minutes before the ACLU was to try to get us off scott free, the police get an idea to move us again. We had just had a successful political agitprop session, so our spirits were high. The prospect of further isolation from the outside world was a little too much for me to bear, so I submitted to processing: fingerprinting, photograph—trial on June 24th on disorderly conduct charges.

What lessons can we draw from this incident? First of all, I suppose, it again proves Mao's dictum regarding political power and the gun. Our civil liberties meant next to nothing when a political decision had been made on the highest level. Next, the action concretized for me at least, the connection between the waging of an adventuristic, imperialist war and the emergence of a domestic police state to silence criticism of that war. The action should also convince us of the necessity for community organizing, for bringing the real people into such non-violent resistance. If the crowd from the April 24th march had been doing what we did May 3rd, Washington would surely have been shut down. We were a vanguard movement, but one that was in constant danger of perceiving itself as a mass movement. As a cadrebuilding action, May Day was superb. Perhaps the gains in terms of radicalization of those present, particularly those whose only offense had been going to school on the morning of May 3rd, or wearing long hair, will outweigh any alienation of working and middle class support. Back to our constituencies, to solidify and expand our bases for the mass actions to come!

At the Youth Conference



Sam and Marshall at the conference

by Sam Konkin

we came, we saw, we converted

Pleasantly surprised by the 75 degree weather we encountered arriving at Denver's airport, far higher than predicted, we continue by a long bus ride to Estes Park, Colorado. After the first night, we awoke to heavy snowfall and deficient plumbing. Nature was foreshadowing an allegory of the White House Conference on Youth.

From April 18 to April 22, budding young establishmentarians, reform-tripping on parliamentary procedure, and a few free-loading radicals condensed from around the world to Estes Park, the new mecca for Meeting Freaks.

Several invitations to the Conference were passed along the spectrum from conservative to less conservative libertarians; most invitations were ultimately turned down. Final judgement as to who should receive the applications for invitations ended in the hands of Society for Individual Liberty/ California Libertarian Alliance axis leadership, and led to complaints by Eastern RLA of exclusion. Nevertheless, all three libertarians who swallowed their repugnance of attending a purely statist function, (not to mention repugnance of the food served there) were RLA'ers and openly wore black flag buttons. Besides myself, Ron Kimberling of California and Marshall Beerwinkle of Texas were present.

Two more left anarchists, Sissy Kelly of D.C. and Joost van Nimis (International Delegate who attended Dartmouth) put on RLA buttons during the Conference. All were on different task forces.

At first a libertarian caucus was considered and rudimentary efforts were made to create it. To our surprise, the formation of an Anarchist Caucus was announced, and so, the RLA'ers trudged through the snow to the outlying cabin where the meeting was to be held. The meeting was called by a press delegate of a University of California paper, and attended by VILLAGE VOICE and ROLLING STONE reporters. No concrete proposals emerged from the ten people there, but much joyful chemistry was in evidence; nor did anyone stay around for the Free Enterprise Caucus that was to follow in that cabin. Most of the group broke off to attend the Press Conference where the aforementioned chemistry acted as a crap-repellent. Those interested in the details of the Press Conference can contact Ron Kimberling, c/o CLA, Box 572, Santa Ana, Cal. RLA attendance of the Task Force meetings with the exception of two converts, was poor, but coffeehouse attendance, where acid rock light shows were held, was excellent.

The libertarian delegates spent most of their time with delegates interested in libertarianism. Some libertarian influence was exhibited in the Preamble and Report of the draft Task Force. The Drug Task Force advocated legalization and regulation of marijuana, and the right to use other drugs coupled with *increased* persecution of dealers, split libertarian ranks. I made my only address to the Assembly: an impassioned attack on regulations and control. The remaining libertarians felt their personal safety from arrest was more important than battling for principle, and quietly voted for the Report. No other measure evoked action by RLA at the Conference, and voting was split on other issues. One example of this was the Vietnam recommendation demanding complete American withdrawal but massive US aid in "reparations" which I felt was continuing Imperialism in a more "accepted" guise. Fortunately another decade must pass before the State will hold another White House Co-opt of Youth.

Notes on Military Crises

by Jack Flash

The armed forces are a critical force in the maintenance of order throughout the empire and, increasingly, on the home front in America. One growing factor in the crumbling of the Leviathan is the crises in the army that has recently been highlighted by several events.

The army in Vietnam, as even the bourgeois media has finally noted, is having discipline problems: a light-hearted indication is that GI's prefer passing a joint to killing Cong, and risking their own lives for a war they don't believe in. Unfortunately, soldiers are also shooting up hard drugs in order to escape the misery of the war, so fear grips parents not just that their sons might come home in a pine box, but that heroin addiction might be the ultimate reward for Vietnam service. (It has now come to light that the CIA and the puppet rulers of South Vietnam are the chief pushers in the drug trade in Southeast Asia— see the May issue of RAMPARTS and May 20 issue of LIBERATED GUARDIAN). But resistance to the Good-German role in the army has also taken more conscious and political forms. "Search and destroy" missions have become "search and evade" missions. Troops have simply refused to go into battle or on missions they thought senseless and dangerous. In a TV interview, soldiers who had refused to go on a mission they considered unworthy replied that they would certainly follow orders in the future—provided they thought the missions were sensible. Generals fear open rebellion especially among black GI's who are highly conscious of who the real enemy is, and many of whom plan to join militant liberation struggles when they return to the States. Nobody wants the war.

In late April the National Liberation Front and the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam responded to the sentiment of American soldiers in a proclamation that gives a boost to GI's seeking peace with the people of Vietnam. The proclamation ordered, among other things, that the People's Liberation Army (PLA—the army of the NLF and PRG), "not to attack those anti-war U.S. servicemen, individuals or groups, who demand repatriation, oppose orders of the U.S. commanders, and abstain from hostile actions against the PLA... or the South Vietnamese people... To stand ready to extend aid and protection to those anti-war U.S. servicemen who have to run away out of their opposition to combat orders... To welcome and give good treatment to those U.S. servicemen who cross over to the South Vietnamese people and the PLA, to stand ready to help them go home or seek asylum in another country if they so request... To welcome and to grant appropriate rewards to those U.S. servicemen who support the NLF and PRG..." The NLF has indicated that there are already American soldiers fighting on the side of the PLA. While it is unlikely that large numbers of soldiers will actually join the NLF forces, the NLF proclamation welcoming such actions helps make that possibility a real threat as the war drags on and on. What is likely is the continual increase of the understanding that the NLF/PRG is not the enemy of the American soldier as such but is the enemy of imperialist aggression, and that there is no point for American GI's to engage in combat with the "enemy" who is pledged not to attack when hostilities are not shown (and PLA soldiers are directed to take note of peace literature and signs). The result should be an increase of search and evasion. Another form of active resistance on the rise recently, is what is called "fragging"— the practice of offing particularly oppressive officers with fragmentation grenades or other explosives. The Pentagon has been forced to admit the existence of "fragging" claiming (by their figures) that one hundred and nine officers last year alone were so despicable that their men put them out of commission permanently. The authoritarian structure of the army offers no peaceful method for the expression of popular sentiment.

For GI's simply wanting OUT NOW, desertion has become the popular method of beating Nixon's pullout timetable. The desertion rate (which doesn't even include those AWOL under 30 days) is now almost 100,000 per year! The army has little hope of recovering its lost soldiers on such a scale. Obtaining CO's, dishonorable discharges, work slowdowns, and sabotage are other forms of resistance on the rise.

There is also a new crises shaping up on the home front, not just attack on the war from the left, but a protest of "middle americans," normally conservative americans. This is the crises sparked by the trial and conviction of Lt. William Calley.

Most Americans have been satisfied with the ruling class explanations of the war, even as sons were dragged away. There may have been regret, but no critique of the war emerged. The only serious breach began on the issue of atrocities, that is, those incidents which are not supposed to happen according to the civilized rules of war defined by bourgeois morality. Of course, even proof of atrocities had been around for a long time before the liberal wing of the bourgeois media began to report on such things. But finally people have become aware that America is committing atrocities in Vietnam and sentiment against the war for this and other reasons has spread tremendously.

Americans think it is a dirty war. Well, the state had an answer: We'll cleanse ourselves of these horrible acts against humanity. In a war that has seen such monuments to imperialist devastation as napalm, defoliation of hundreds of thousands of

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Censorship and the American State: Repressive Tolerance

by Ralph Fucetola

Much of history has been motivated by each man's desire to be his own master. The rulers of men have been wary of this dangerous desire; this ultimate threat to their monopoly of the lives, energy and property of most men. Thus— for as long as there has been a coercive social organization—the expression of ideas has been closely restricted. Government has ever been concerned with maintaining its control of the material elements of men's lives by controlling men's minds: by controlling the teaching process, by CENSORING expression.

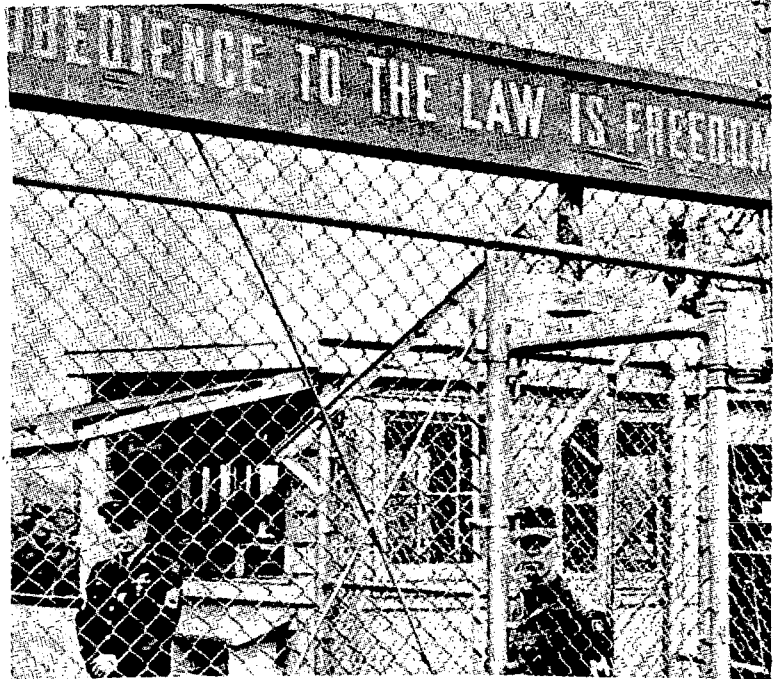
The American state is the most sophisticated on earth: no lists of proscribed books, no colonels from the junta with their bumbling heavy-handedness, no open state ownership of the means of communication. The American state is very sophisticated. America's rulers know, in the words of Gabriel Kolko, that

it is the illusion of the possibility of significant change—of true freedom in society— that helps make possible its practical suppression via liberal politics and gradualism which, as historical fact, never exceed predetermined orbits and assumptions. . .(The Roots of American Foreign Policy pp. 7-8).

Therefore, to uncover the scope of censorship in this nation-state, it is necessary to do more than just peruse the law books: citing cases and statutes or studying bureaus will not expose the nature of expression control in America. A radical approach, an approach which goes to the "roots" of the matter is needed: what is the root concern of men's rulers? To maintain their power. What is power? Control over the lives, energy and property of all people within the grasp of those rulers. Thus, an economic analysis is essential to understand censorship in America.

The initial step is to zero in on the economic nature of the modern nation-state, the American state in particular. There are only two ways of obtaining anything of value on this earth: by the process of production and trade or sharing on a voluntary basis; or by the use of coercion, the first method is the free market method, the second is the POLITICAL method: in essence, the state is an instrument used by some individuals to maintain a predatory position in society—it is nothing more than legitimized theft.

Keeping this model of the state in mind, the method of thought control in America becomes ascertainable. The first element of control is direct state-censorship of expression. This is mainly limited to the area of "obscenity". The case of Roth v. United States (354 US 476, 1957) was the earliest case which clearly presented the prohibition of "obscene" speech to the Supreme Court. The court fulfilled its historic role as preserver of state-power in America by deciding, "it is apparent that the unconditional phrasing of the First Amendment was not intended to protect every utterance. . ." So much for the plain meaning of words, the constitution and limited government. The high court held that "obscene" speech is not "protected speech"; then the court circled beyond that to indicate it was well aware that it was attempting to control thoughts, but this was constitutionally acceptable because "obscenity" was not protected speech. The highest court of the American state proclaimed that "Ceaseless vigilance is the watchword to prevent. . . [freedom of speech's]



erosion by Congress or by the States. . ." It then continued to approve of a "test" which would allow interference if the speech violates the vague and shifting (and non-existent?) "common conscience of the community by present day standards. . ." !

There is a sign over the gate into Fort Dix in New Jersey; it reads: "FREEDOM IS OBEDIENCE TO THE LAW". This obedience is instilled by repressive sexual roles, reinforced by censorship of "obscenity", subservient economic roles, the authoritarian nature of the state's schools— by all public institutions. It is achieved chiefly by manipulation of expression, either within one person's mind or among people. The overt censorship practiced in regard to sexuality is also applied to "learning" in the school system. There is little need to document the strict control over educational material which goes beyond the censor's prohibitions to the requirement that certain state-approved doctrines and subjects be taught. The requirements also apply to "private" schools. In addition, the educational structure has always concerned itself with more than the inculcation of knowledge. Life-style control is of major importance especially in our "free public schools": current student agitation over dress codes, hair length and submission to such ritualistic activities like flag-saluting bears witness to this. The school is, indeed, an "obedience factory" where naturally curious and active young people are required to maintain silence, stillness, straight lines; where humiliating permission must be obtained even to go to the toilet; where DISCIPLINE is the chief product.

A recent National Education Association survey shows that 57% of the nation's teachers believe they need the power to inflict corporal punishment in order to maintain discipline in the schools. (PARADE MAGAZINE, New York, July 19, 1970, p.21). The overriding importance of the educational system must not be underestimated. It is precisely mass, state-controlled,

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censored education which makes possible the maintenance of the cultural attitudes needed to continue the ruling elite's authority. And it is exactly the present disintegration of that system which offers the greatest hope for real change in society.

A more direct way of enforcing "obedience to the law" is through court-imposed limits on free-speech in relation to its proceedings. In the most direct and meaningful manner, thought-obedience is required of all who come into contact with the judicial system. This extends from such minor matters as the submissive manner in which one is expected and required to address his "honor" the judge, to direct control of out-of-court comment on court proceedings. While the case of *Wood v. Georgia* (370 US 375, 1962) placed some limits on this control, the power of the courts to engage in such control, when there is a "clear and present danger" to the court's power was upheld. The regulation of in-court speech continues unabated: the infamous "Chicago Conspiracy Trial" indicated just how far a court will go in preventing expression when the state's vital political interests are at stake: Bobby Seale, bound and gagged, should be sufficient evidence of the use of state-power in America to coerce submission and silence.

Yet, in addition to these specific governmental regulations of speech— and not to deny them their proper place in the scheme of repression— a more subtle, economic set of controls is imposed by the ruling elite on the means of *mass* communications. It is the contention of the "revisionist" historical school, that the history of the United States can best be understood NOT as a function of achieved consensus expressed through various "progressive" laws and bureaus, but, rather, as a result of ruling elite manipulation of the state apparatus to maintain and increase its monopoly power using "liberal" rhetoric. This analysis conforms to the predatory economic nature of the state, and sheds a sinister light on the nationalization and monopolization of the means of mass communications.

Actually, control over the means of mass communications has been made possible by the ruling elite *because* of its control of the state. The statistics of oligopolistic control of the entire economy are readily available: one commonly cited statistic is that a smaller percentage of the population controls a larger share of the means of production now than at the turn of the century. The same is true of the means of communications. Most Americans receive the news of the day, all forms of public information from television. Of course, television is among the most monopolized areas of communications. There are three major networks, one of which (NBC) is owned by a major defense contractor (RCA) which itself was created by several rival electronics firms with government assistance after the First World War. The original power of the large corporations over the broadcasting business was not great: most commentators describe the early years of radio as "anarchical" and some even grant individual experimenters a share of the credit for early developments. It was to coercively end the "chaos" on the airwaves that the first Federal control was instituted; it is exactly since that time that monopolization has grown. As to television: it is not mere chance that only 13 station positions were included on the first TV receiving sets, though several times that many could have been included: rather this must have been a conscious decision to limit the number of stations for economic reasons— to create a monopoly situation.

There is additional evidence of the existence of a ruling elite monopoly over the broadcasting industry. The military-industrial complex has specific organizations which continue the business-governmental connection. One of these clubs for our

rulers is the Armed Forces Communications and Electronics Association (AFCEA). The purpose of the group? Its former president and a permanent director, General David Sarnoff, chairman of RCA, suggested that there is "the working alliance of industrial and military leadership represented in this organization..." Furthermore, "AFCEA has fashioned a community of interest so closely interwoven that whatever affects the progress of one partner is reflected in the progress of the other..." (at an AFCEA banquet of 5/26/65). The "community of interest" is the interest of rulers over the ruled: the freedom of speech has nothing to do with the preservation of rule. It is no wonder that Fred W. Friendly remarked: "I must confess that in my almost two years as the head of CBS News, I tempered my news judgement and tailored by conscience more than once..." But of course, there are more direct interventions than AFCEA. The Pentagon spends, by CBS News' estimate, \$160,000,000 each year on the mass media. This includes such propaganda films as the recent "A Day in Vietnam" which opens with shots of wounded GI's then cuts to American young people burning the flag: the protestors' segment of the film is TINTED RED!! (in "Selling the Pentagon", CBS news special, 2/23/71).

The state apparatus need not directly censor the mass media to obtain the desired conformity: the realities of that "community of interest" will work well enough. The situation causes, in

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Herbert Marcuse's phrase, "a free press which censors itself. . ."; the same applies to the even more monopolistic "free" broadcast industry. Of course, it is impossible for former generals, and president's wives to own ALL the means of mass communications, thus, actual state censorship is undertaken by the FCC which "protects" the People, who, by law, "own" the airwaves. The First Amendment? "Despite the limitations of the First Amendment. . . the freedom to program is not absolute. . ." (From the FCC's "Public Notice" of 7/1/64). So much for the vaunted government of laws, not men.

The FCC does not have to engage in massive censorship to obtain conformity to ruling elite interests: a few incidents of refusal to renew licenses (under the non-objective "public interest" standard), a few threats, and obedience follows. The chilling, FREEZING, effect of such bureaucratic action can have one result: self-censorship.

This may be seen in the FCC's cryptic ruling of 3/5/71 which hinted that playing "drug-related" songs could cost a station its license at renewal time. Shortly after its pronouncement the FCC confessed that its decision was based largely on a Pentagon briefing about drug and "subversive" songs. FCC Commissioner Johnson—whose hair length and ideas have recently changed—called the decision "an unsuccessfully disguised effort to censor song lyrics that the majority disapprove of. . ." (ROLLING STONE magazine, April 1, 1971).

There may be no "scholarly" evidence, but it should be obvious to anyone watching the major television network news programs, that in the months following Vice President Agnew's well publicized denunciation of the networks, reporting of anti-government activity and the Southeast Asian morass has taken on a more pro-administration line. Perhaps Glen Robinson, writing in the Minnesota Law Review caught the essence: "government intervention in broadcasting programming has in fact been a major impetus toward conformity and orthodoxy. . ." Mr. Robinson's lengthy work clearly exposes the entire structure of FCC control and places the blame where it belongs: on the

notion, accepted by the Supreme Court (NBC v. USA, 319 US 190, 1943), that the Public owns the airways:

To say that airwaves, . . . can be owned by anyone is simply to indulge in fantasy. Surely no one seriously supposes that the airwaves are a thing of nature which can be possessed, occupied or used in any normal sense of the word. In actuality, "airways" is merely a convenient shorthand, an abstraction for a phenomenon created as a result of the use of privately owned facilities. . .

This, he suggests, is the flaw in Justice Frankfurter's majority opinion. I suggest that the "public ownership" rationalization is a usual ruling elite mechanism to nationalize and monopolize property, thus placing that property securely in its control. The people were not "ready" for outright confiscation of transmission facilities and the obvious denial of free expression which would develop from total bureaucratic control, thus the lie of "public ownership" of the airwaves to continue the myth of free expression within the reality of state control.

America's rulers have created a complex system to control radio and television, their approach to the telephone was much simpler. There is only one phone company in town: AT&T (with a few of its old competitors strictly confined to out-of-the-way districts.) The AT&T story is important to understand if the role of the state is creating ruling elite monopolies is to be understood. Except for (perhaps massive) wiretapping, this area of communications is not presently directly censored or otherwise hampered. Originally, AT&T had a nearly total monopoly on telephonic communications due to its possession of certain patents. Upon the expiration of those patents, the industry began a period of intense competition and growth. AT&T was unable to prevent the encroachment of other telephone companies, though it refused to deal with them and used its position (and J.P. Morgan's influence) to prevent the state-monopoly banks from granting them loans. Finally, it choose to SUPPORT the creation of Federal control to regain its monopoly or at least confine its competitors. AT&T's President Vail, in 1914, indicated that his company was the first to call for Federal regulation; and "We believe in government control of public utilities" (quoted by Kolko in *The Triumph of Conservatism*) Historically all Federal control was instituted similarly: a ruling elite monopoly or cartel using its state to maintain its power against market forces. The history of the closely allied broadcasting business is identical. Book publishing and newspaper publishing are undergoing the same process of

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libertarian analysis

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nationalization through monopoly/oligopoly control. For example, NBC's "parent" RCA owns Random House and CBS owns Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Herbert Marcuse first suggested the phrase "repressive tolerance" to define the status of free speech in America. The phrase echoes Kolko's concept of "liberal" repression within the "illusion of the possibility of significant change..." This is indeed a strange situation: the more we talk of things changing, the more they stay the same. Or, is it so strange? Perhaps we should play super-sleuth for a moment and ask the detective's question: who benefits? The only group of people who can possibly benefit is that parasitic caste in society, those bureaucrats, politicians, intellectuals and businessmen who prefer to use the state to steal wealth rather than engage in the productive process. It is the existence of a ruling elite— a cabal composed of business, political and family connections— which pulls together the whole complex structure of increasing state control in America. In order to maintain their age-old predatory position, this gang must prevent people from learning the truth about their system: they must—by law, by schooling, by subtle economic manipulation— censor expression.



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acres , poisonous gases, anti-personnel bombs, saturation bombing of populated village areas, the creation of vast "free-fire zones," and the forced evacuation of civilian populations, the state offered to absolve America by bringing to trial a young lieutenant accused of killing unarmed civilians at rifle point. It was simple: My Lai was the crime, Calley the criminal. The ruling class breathed a sigh of relief. Yes, Calley is guilty; he himself admits "wasting" Vietnamese people.

But for some reason the American people who had hitherto swallowed the government's words as truth, balked and rebelled at the idea that the crime of the war could just be laid on the head of Calley. The state's honeymoon with its patriotic masses was ended. General Westmoreland himself said that such atrocities were the result of poor leadership. So Americans decided that the guilt must extend much further up the chain of command to the real leadership, surely to the Pentagon. Americans had been silent when their boys were taken away to be trained to kill, they remembered past wars and accepted it grimly. But now the young soldiers were supposed to be guilty of WAR CRIMES! It is a great shock for the silent patriotic Americans to be told by their own state that their sons may be involved in war crimes. The result was that many felt, well, maybe it wasn't *their* war after all. People felt betrayed by the government that had all along denied that anything was going wrong in Southeast Asia. Some draft boards even threatened not to draft soldiers if they are just going to be charged with crimes after fighting like good soldiers. Westmoreland himself soon felt called upon to state that he didn't think he himself was a war criminal or comparable to the Japanese commander that the U.S. executed for war crimes after WWII (getting edgy?).

Of course, the Americans who reacted most strongly to the Calley case still do not have a real understanding of the war. Their sympathy is for Calley and the plight of American soldiers but not for the Vietnamese people who are the victims of the war in all its criminal aspects. And the right-wing has attempted to make a hero out of Calley, something which many will no doubt accept, unfortunately.

But the response to the Calley case, despite its guttural and generally confused form, has caused people who have been largely immune to left-wing attacks on the war to reconsider the idea that Vietnam is a war fought in *their* interests for which *they* are responsible. It remains for radicals to provide a consistent analysis of these breakdowns in the military system, which too often have been monopolized by the ideologues of the reactionary right. We must point out that even if Calley committed crimes at My Lai, the real criminals are indeed higher up— from the Pentagon to the White House to Wall Street—and that it is in interest of this ruling class that the Vietnam war is being waged.

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WE, AS RADICAL LIBERTARIANS AFFIRM:

- That individuals must be free to organize their lives, and the forms of their communities and societies on whatever voluntary bases they choose;
- That any attempt to introduce violence into social relationships is a crime committed against each one of us: the ruling class and their states murder, tyrannize and loot us in order to maintain their predatory position of privilege; thus the state and its tentacles of power constitute the major criminal element in society today — it must be isolated and destroyed; alternate institutions can respond to all the needs and life-styles of the people;
- That as revolutionaries, we reject mere parliamentary reformism; we reject power-plays that always substitute one state tyranny for another: political power must be decentralized and ultimately abolished, not seized; we must take control over our own lives.

THE ABOLITIONIST is published monthly by John Brotschol, Ralph Fucetola III, Vincent Ninelli, Steve Halbrook, Frank X. Richter, and Peter Sherman. Contributors include Wally Conger, Bill Baumgarth, and Geoffrey Hall. Member of the Libertarian Press Association.

Those who profess to favor freedom and yet deprecate agitation, are men who want rain without thunder and lightning. They want the ocean without the roar of its many waters.—

Frederick Douglass

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Photos in this issue are by Ralph Fucetola

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